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ABSTRACT

Examined are the relationships of student responsibility and parent-adolescent relations to the school performance of middle-school-age youth. A total of 120 families with a first-born child between 11 and 16 years of age participated in the study. Assessment of adolescent responsibility included measures of self-reliance, work orientation, resistance to peer pressure, and involvement in household responsibilities. Assessment of the parent-child relationship included measures of decision-making, parental acceptance, and parental control. Measures of school performance were students' English and mathematics grades, attendance records, and standardized achievement test scores. In general, cross-sectional analyses indicated that adolescent responsibility and a constellation of parenting practices described as "authoritative" are associated with school success. However, longitudinal analyses indicated that responsibility is a correlate, rather than an antecedent, of school success, whereas authoritative parenting actually enhances school performance. For reasons not yet fully understood, youngsters whose parents are relatively less permissive, more accepting, and less psychologically controlling do better in school than do their peers. (RH)

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Adolescent Responsibility, Parent-Child Relations, and School Performance

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Abstract

The present study examines the contemporaneous and over-time impact of personal responsibility and parent-child relations on the school performance and attendance of 120 10- to 15-year-olds. Assessment of adolescent responsibility includes measures of self-reliance, work orientation, resistance to peer pressure, and involvement in household responsibilities. Assessment of the parent-child relationship includes measures of decision-making, parental acceptance, and parental control. Analyses control for the effects of family socioeconomic status adolescents' sex, age, and scores on standardized tests of achievement. In general, cross-sectional analyses indicate that adolescent responsibility and a constellation of parenting practices described as "authoritative" are each associated with school success. Longitudinal analyses indicate, however, that responsibility is a correlate, rather than antecedent, of school success, whereas authoritative parenting actually enhances school performance. For reasons not yet fully understood, youngsters whose parents are relatively less permissive, more accepting, and less psychologically controlling do better in school than their peers.

As adolescents progress from elementary school into secondary school, they are expected to take increasing responsibility for self-management in order to be academically successful. In light of this, it seems reasonable to propose that students' ability to function with an adequate level of responsibility is an important determinant of school success during the secondary years. Our understanding of the relation between the development of personal responsibility and academic success among adolescents is exceedingly limited, however. Most studies of the psychological characteristics of good versus poor students have focused on either self-esteem or achievement motivations and beliefs (see Harter, 1983; and Dweck & Elliot, 1983, for recent summaries). Similarly, studies of adolescent responsibility have seldom examined the implications of its development for school achievement. (One exception is found in the work of Greenberger [1982], who suggests that differences in psychosocial maturity may distinguish successful from unsuccessful students above and beyond differences attributable to social class or academic ability.) Despite the putative significance of the development of responsible autonomy during adolescence (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986), we actually know surprisingly little about the real-world implications of individual differences in adolescent autonomy. School is

certainly one arena in which the benefits of responsible autonomy ought to be visible.

Because the family plays a crucial role in the development of responsible autonomy (Baumrind, 1978), one might speculate that the elusive studies of responsibility and school achievement in adolescence may be buried within the literature on familial influences on school success. This is not the case, however. Our knowledge about the relation between parenting practices and school success among adolescents is as limited as our knowledge about school success and adolescent responsibility. To date, studies of familial influences on youngsters' achievement have focused mainly on (1) parental influences on school performance of elementary school students, as opposed to adolescents (see also Dornbusch et al., in press); (2) parental influences on achievement orientation, as opposed to school performance (e.g., Stein & Bailey, 1973); (3) the relation between parental identification, as opposed to parent-child relations, and academic achievement (e.g., Shaw and White, 1965); or, most commonly, (4) the overarching impact of socioeconomic status (e.g., Jencks, 1972) or family structure (e.g., Hetherington, Camara, and Featherman, 1982) on school performance. In Bronfenbrenner's (1979) terms, most studies of familial influences on adolescent achievement have focused on the "microsystem" (e.g., the family's influence on the

adolescent's personality) or the "exosystem" (the influence of social structure within which the adolescent lives) rather than on the "mesosystem" (the concrete linkage between experiences in the home environment and experiences in the school).

One recent exception to this general trend is found in the work of Dornbusch and his colleagues (Dornbusch et al., in press), who have demonstrated that either excessively authoritarian or excessively permissive parenting is negatively associated with academic achievement among high school students. This finding is consistent with the more general literature on the socialization consequences of various parenting behaviors (see Maccoby & Martin, 1983), which suggests that a constellation of parenting characteristics described as "authoritative" (cf. Baumrind, 1978) -- including democratic (as opposed to permissive or authoritarian) decision-making practices and warm (as opposed to hostile) parent-child relations -- should be correlated with school success (see also Hill, 1980).

Questions about the benefits of certain psychological attributes or familial characteristics to school performance can only be fully examined with longitudinal data. Although most reviews of the literature on parent-child relations in childhood and adolescence (e.g., Maccoby & Martin, 1983) note that the parent-child relationship is bidirectional, most empirical studies of parental influences on student

achievement are constrained by designs that beg the causal question. Thus, for example, as Dornbusch et al. (in press) point out, it is not clear from their study whether poor achievement leads to parental authoritarianism (or permissiveness) or vice-versa. Similarly, most of the research on psychological correlates of academic achievement (e.g., Greenberger, 1982) does not clearly indicate whether certain characteristics do in fact lead to school success or alternatively, whether students who succeed in school are more likely to develop these attributes as a result. Indeed, Harter (1983) provides persuasive evidence that self-esteem, in particular, is more likely to be a consequence than an antecedent of academic accomplishment.

The present study examines the relation between student responsibility and parent-adolescent relations, on the one hand, and school performance, on the other, in a sample of middle school age youngsters. Specifically, we look at four different aspects of adolescent responsibility (self-reliance, work orientation, resistance to peer pressure, and involvement in household responsibilities) and two different aspects of the parent-child relationship (decision-making and parenting style) in relation to two indices of school performance (grades and attendance), using cross-sectional as well as longitudinal data that permit the assessment of the concurrent as well as over-time effects. In contrast to many previous studies, the effects of

socioeconomic status and students' performance on standardized tests of achievement are held constant.

Two sets of hypotheses are examined. The first concerns the contemporaneous relation between responsibility and parenting practices and school performance. In light of previous research and an extensive literature on socialization, it is hypothesized that (1) youngsters who exhibit responsibility outside of school perform better in school than their less responsible peers and (2) that authoritative parenting practices are correlated with school success. The second set of hypotheses concerns the over-time relation between these variables. Here we ask (1) whether being responsible actually promotes school success and (2) whether authoritative parenting actually enhances school performance.

Method

Sample

The sample for the study is composed of 157 families with a first born child between the ages of 11 and 16. Participating families were selected via a three-step process, beginning with a large representative sample of nearly 900 adolescents enrolled in the Madison (Wisconsin) school district, who were surveyed in their classrooms; and ending with a subsample of 157 families with first-born adolescents, who were surveyed in their homes in 1985 and again in 1986. Participation rates in each phase of the data

collection were adequate: 94% of all youngsters attending school on the day of the survey participated in the research: 70% of the families contacted by our research staff agreed to participate in the study in 1985: and 75% of these families agreed to participate in the follow-up one year later. As a group, the participating families did not differ from the eligible nonparticipants on any of the demographic variables assessed (i.e., socioeconomic status, household composition, maternal employment status). Subsequent comparisons between the demographic characteristics of the study sample and that of the district's student population as a whole, based on information provided by the district, indicate that the school sample and the family subsample are representative of the district population. The sample is evenly divided by sex: predominantly white (88%); socioeconomically heterogeneous (39% blue collar, 37% white-collar, 24% professional, as determined by parental occupation); from a variety of family structures (64% biologically intact, 21% single parent, 15% stepfamily); and with a variety of maternal work patterns (58% employed full-time, 31% employed part-time, 11% not working). Data on achievement test scores (see below), which was used as a covariate in each phase of the analysis, was available for only 120 of the 157 students, limiting the size of the sample to this maximum number.

Measures

Data on family relations and adolescent responsibility were collected during school and home visits conducted between April and June, 1985 and again one year later. Of interest in the present analysis are 1985 measures of adolescent responsibility and adolescent-parent relationships, and 1985 and 1986 measures of school performance. Students also provided information on parental occupation, which was used to index family socioeconomic status. In the present analyses, socioeconomic status was treated as a three-level variable (blue-collar, white-collar, and professional) and used as a covariate in the analyses.

Measures of Adolescent Responsibility

Work orientation. The work orientation subscale of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory (Form D) (Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr & Knerr, 1974) was used to assess this aspect of responsibility. The work orientation subscale is composed of ten items and has been shown to have adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Greenberger & Bond, 1976). A sample item, reverse scored, is, "I get upset if I am not immediately successful in learning something new". In the present study, the internal consistency of this measure was .70.

Self-reliance. The self-reliance subscale of the Psychosocial Maturity Inventory (Form D) (Greenberger,

Josselson, Knerr & Knerr, 1974) was used to assess this aspect of responsibility. The self-reliance subscale is composed of ten items and has been shown to have adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Greenberger & Bond, 1976). A sample item, reverse scored, is, "In a group I prefer to let other people make the decisions". In the present study, the internal consistency of this measure was .68.

Resistance to peer pressure. The measure of resistance to peer pressure (Berndt, 1979) presents the respondent with a series of hypothetical dilemmas and asks the youngster to choose between two courses of action -- one suggested by the youngster's "best friends"; the other, what the youngster "really" thinks he or she should do -- and indicate how certain, on a six-point scale, he or she is of the decision. In the present report, scores derived from responses to ten antisocial situations (involving, for example, vandalism, cheating on an exam, stealing) are used. Studies of the validity of self-report conformity instruments indicate that adolescents' "self-reports show moderate or strong correlations with their actual behavior, even if the behavior is not socially desirable" (Berndt, 1979, p. 609: see also Brown, et al., 1986). The internal consistency of the measure in the present study is .85.

Household chores. Each adolescent completed a brief questionnaire assessing the extent and degree of his or her

involvement in ten different household responsibilities, including cleaning, babysitting, yardwork, and a variety of other domestic responsibilities. Responses to each of the items ranged on a four-point scale from "I don't do this at all" to "I spend more than 10 hours each week doing this". The scores for each item were summed to form a scale measuring each adolescent's weekly involvement in household chores.

Measures of Adolescent-Parent Relations

Patterns of family decision-making. Each adolescent completed a checklist concerning 17 areas of decision-making on issues relevant to children in the age range studied (e.g., curfew, spending money, leisure activities, completing school assignments). For each item, youngsters indicated whether their parents dictated how the adolescent should behave, asked the youngster's opinion but retained the final say on the matter, or left the decision entirely up to the youngster. Following Dornbusch et al. (1985), scores for authoritarian (parents dictate), democratic (parents ask opinion but maintain ultimate control), and permissive (child decides) decision-making were calculated by summing the number of items in each of the three categories and converting the total to a proportion of the total number of issues. The internal consistency of the measure, as determined by Cronbach's alpha, is .78.

Adolescents' reports of parental acceptance and control. Adolescents' characterizations of their parents' acceptance and control derived from these two subscales of the Child Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (CRPBI). The CRPBI is a Likert-scale format report of parental disciplinary practices that yields measures of perceived acceptance (warmth-hostility) and psychological control (control-autonomy) for mothers and fathers separately. A substantial literature on parent-child relations documents the usefulness of these dimensions in the study of family relations (see Maccoby & Martin, 1983, for a recent review). The revised version of the CRPBI has a reliability of .84 (Schwartz et al., 1984).

Measures of School Performance

Information on adolescents' grades in school, attendance records, and standardized achievement test scores were provided by the school district. In order to permit comparability across grade levels, only English and mathematics grades were used. In the present analyses, all English and math grades for a given year were averaged to yield one composite grade-point-average for that academic year, on a 4-point scale. The number of days of school missed during a given year was used as a measure of each adolescent's level of absenteeism. Data on grades and absenteeism were available for 1985 and 1986, thus

permitting the analysis of the over-time relation between responsibility, family relations, and school performance.

Students' scores on standardized tests of math and verbal achievement were used as covariates in all analyses. In order to increase the sample variability on these measures, percentile scores based on district norms, rather than on national norms, were used. For all fifth and sixth graders, fifth grade achievement scores were used; for eighth and ninth graders, eighth grade achievement scores were used.

Data Analysis

Because student responsibility, family relations, and school performance all vary as a function of adolescent age, sex, and socioeconomic status, and because grades in school and school attendance are also correlated with youngsters' scores on standardized achievement tests, it was necessary to examine the relation between school performance and student responsibility or family relations while controlling for the effects of these likely confounding factors. Accordingly, the data were analyzed via a series of multiple regression analyses, in which the relations between 1985 school performance and the student responsbility or family relations variables were examined after controlling for the effects of adolescent age, sex, socioeconomic status, and achievement test scores. In the analyses of longitudinal data, students' 1985 scores on the measure of school grades

or school absence were also used as covariates, in order to examine the impact of 1985 responsibility or family relations scores on 1986 school performance while controlling for 1985 school performance. This amounts to a test of the impact of responsibility or family relations on changes in school performance during the one year period.

In all analyses, tests of the interactions between the independent variables of interest and adolescent sex or age were examined after controlling for the main effects of these variables, in order to examine the possibility that the impact of a given responsibility or family relations variable was moderated by the adolescent's sex or age. If an interaction term reached significance at $p<.05$ or better, follow-up analyses were conducted to examine the nature of the interaction. A sex or age difference is discussed only if the appropriate interaction term reached significance.

Results

Concurrent Predictors of School Grades

Adolescent responsibility. Adolescents' grades in school are related to their general level of responsibility as assessed in terms of their orientation toward work and their capacity to resist peer pressure. In each case, the findings confirm the hypothesis that more responsible youngsters do better in school (for work orientation, $F(1,109)=.220$, $p<.001$; for resistance to peer pressure, $F(1,105)=.119$, $p^2=.09$). Examination of significant

interaction terms indicates that the positive impact of resistance to peer pressure on school performance is stronger for girls ($\underline{b}$=.243) than for boys ($\underline{b}$=.070), and that the positive impact of work orientation is stronger for older students ($\underline{b}$=.259) than for younger ones ($\underline{b}$=.190). Scores on the measure of self-reliance are unrelated to concurrent school grades. Finally, contrary to widespread assumptions about the character-building benefits of assigning household responsibilities to youngsters, the present analyses indicate that household chores may interfere with school performance: youngsters who spend a good deal of time on household responsibilities do <u>worse</u> in school ($\underline{b}$(1,98)=-.147, $\underline{p}$<.05).

<u>Parent-child relations</u>. The analyses confirm the hypothesis that democratic decision-making tends to be associated with enhanced school performance ($\underline{b}$(1,113)=.119, $\underline{p}$=.10), and examination of the significant interaction term indicate that this effect is stronger among boys ($\underline{b}$=.266) than girls ($\underline{b}$=-.102). Analyses also indicate -- again, consistent with previous research -- that parental authoritarianism may impede youngsters' school performance, but here it is only the interaction between sex and authoritarianism that is significant ($\underline{b}$(1,106)=.690, $\underline{p}$<.005), and follow-up analyses indicate that the effect is only substantial among boys ($\underline{b}$=-.301). No correlation is found between parental permissiveness and concurrent school

grades. With respect to parenting style, the analyses indicate that maternal control is negatively related to school performance (b=-.165 (1,110), p<.01) but that the effect is stronger among older youngsters (b=-.207) than younger ones (b=-.089). Concurrent school grades are not related to parental acceptance or to paternal control.

Concurrent Predictors of School Absences

Adolescent responsibility. The relation between out-of-school responsibility and concurrent school attendance is quite modest. Moreover, the only significant relation to emerge is contrary to expectation: Youngsters who score higher on the measure of self-reliance are absent from school more often (b(1,112)=.211, p<.05).

Parent-child relations. Analyses of the relation between family decision-making and school absence corroborate many of the findings concerning school grades. For example, democratic decision-making is associated with lower rates of school absence (b(1,113)=-.190, p<.05), whereas authoritarianism is associated with higher rates of absence among boys (the interaction term yielded b(1,106)=-1.02, p<.005). The findings concerning the relation between parenting style and school absence suggest that youngsters' school attendance is not strongly related to this variable. The only significant relation to emerge indicates that excessive paternal control is correlzted with

higher rates of school absence among boys (the interaction term is significant at $b(1,83)=3.81$, $p<.001$).

Over-Time Predictors of School Grades

Adolescent responsibility. In general, the longitudinal analyses indicate that the development of responsibility may be a correlate or consequence, rather than an antecedent, of school success, consistent with the literature on school success and self-esteem (Harter, 1983). Only in the case of resistance to peer pressure do we find that higher levels of responsibility autonomy lead to improved school achievement ($b(1,102)=.159$, $p<.03$).

Parent-child relations. The longitudinal analyses concerning parent-child relations and subsequent school grades point to the importance of this domain of variables. In general, these analyses confirm several hypotheses derived from the socialization literature. Specifically, (1) parental permissiveness appears to lead to poorer grades in school ($b(1,113)=-.123$, $p=.07$), an effect that is stronger among boys than girls (int term); (2) both maternal and paternal acceptance lead to enhanced school grades ($b(1,109)=.186$, $p<.01$ and $b(1,84)=.164$, $p<.05$), effects that are stronger among girls than boys (the interaction terms yielded $b=-.962$, $p<.05$ and $b=.989$, $p<.05$); and (3) excessive maternal control may diminish school performance over time ($b(1,110)=-.123$, $p=.08$), an effect that is stronger among girls than boys (the interaction term yielded $b(1,103)=-1.007$, $p<.05$).

Over-Time Predictors of School Absences

Adolescent responsibility. As is the case for school grades, the over-time relation between adolescent responsibility and school attendence is not strong. With regard to work orientation, a significant interaction between student age and this variable in the prediction of subsequent school absences ($b(1,106)=1.64$, $p<.003$) indicates that a healthy work orientation may attenuate school absence among younger students, but not older ones. No other tests of main effects or interactions in this set of variables reached significance, however.

Parent-child relations. The longitudinal analyses once again point to the deleterious effects of parental permissiveness. Consistent with the findings for school grades, parental permissiveness leads to increased absenteeism ($b(1,113)=.186$, $p<.04$), and the deleterious effects of permissiveness are stronger for boys than for girls (the interaction term yielded $b(1,106)=-1.124$, $p<.001$): analyses also indicate that the deleterious effects may be stronger for older than for younger students (the interaction term yielded $b(1,106)=.904$, $p<.10$). But in contrast to the correlational findings concerning the negative relation between authoritarianism and school attendance, the longer-term impact of authoritarianism on attendance tends to be positive ($b(1,113)=-.163$, $p=.10$).

Magnitude of Effects

Because the analyses examine the contribution of adolescent responsibility and parent-child relations to the prediction of school performance above and beyond the contribution of age, sex, socioeconomic status and achievement test scores (and in the longitudinal analyses, above and beyond the contribution of the previous year's level of school performance as well), estimating the magnitude of the effects may be misleading. Nevertheless, the practically-minded reader may wish to know not only whether certain personal or familial attributes matter, but how much they do.

To this end, the unstandardized regression coefficients of each of the independent variables that had proven significant were used to predict the grade-point averages of youngsters scoring at the 25th versus 75th percentile of that predictor variable, and these scores were differenced, as a way of calculating the absolute impact on grade-point-average between students scoring "relatively low" and "relatively high" on the variable of interest. The results of these analyses are presented in Figures 1 and 2. For example, Figure 1 indicates that the contemporaneous positive effect on grade-point-average of having a strong work orientation translates into a difference of about .13 points in gpa (on a 4-point scale) between students at the 25th versus 75th percentiles of the work orientation distribution. Similarly, Figure 2 indicates that the

negative effect of being reared permissively translates into a difference one year later of about .21 gpa points between students at the 25th versus 75th percentiles of the permissiveness distribution.

Insert Figures 1 and 2 About Here

Discussion

The findings of the present study both corroborate and extend those of previous research. With regard to the relation between youngsters' school performance and their display of responsibility outside of school, the results suggest that adolescents who have a mature orientation toward work and who are responsibly autonomous in the peer group are likely to perform better in school than their less mature and less autonomous peers. But the longitudinal analyses suggest that responsible autonomy is in general a correlate, not an antecedent, of academic achievement. The one exception to this conclusion concerns resistance to peer pressure: here the longitudinal analyses indicate that youngsters who stand up for themselves in the peer group are more likely than their peers to increase their academic standing over time. Perhaps the type of autonomy tapped via this measure reflects more generally youngsters' capacity for autonomous self-direction than do the other indices.

The negative relation between household responsibilities and concurrent academic success, and the absence of a connection between household responsibilities and subsequent success, may surprise those who believe that doing chores at home builds character, and that such character-building pays off at school. (In general, the sparse literature on the psychological correlates of household responsibilities has not supported the time-honored claims in its favor: see Goodnow, in press, for a review.) One might be tempted to conclude in the case at hand that youngsters who are heavily involved in familial responsibilities may find that such chores interfere with homework and other activities related to school success. This interpretation, however, is questionable for two reasons. First, the absolute number of hours youngsters spend on household tasks is not high, even among those students who are "burdened" by such responsibilities. And second, the amount of time youngsters devote to homework is minimal, indicating that there is not very much for household work to interfere with. Although we can not determine why time spent on household responsibilities is negatively correlated with academic success, it does seem cautiously appropriate to question the mainly untested (but widely accepted) presumption that assigning youngsters chores around the home is a good way to increase their general sense of responsibility.

The findings concerning the relation between parent-child relations and school performance are more compelling and are consistent with those reported by Dornbusch et al. (in press). Simply put, youngsters whose parents are relatively less permissive, more accepting, and less psychologically controlling do better in school than their peers. This study indicates that a parenting style that combines warmth and demandingness -- a style that has been described by Baumrind (1978) and by Maccoby and Martin (1983) as "authoritative" -- may enhance youngsters' performance in the classroom and their attendance at school.' The corroboration of cross-sectional findings with longitudinal data indicates that parental "authoritativeness" is not merely a response to youngsters' demonstrated school success and calls into question the notion that parental authoritativeness merely follows from, rather than precedes, the development of competence in children (e.g., Lewis, 1981). Moreover, the nature of the analyses, which controlled for the effects of achievement test scores, prior school grades and attendence, and socioeconomic status, permit us to say with more assurance that the relation between the measures of parent-child relations and school performance are not likely to be artifacts of confounding factors. In general, the pattern of sex differences observed here also corroborates a well-documented finding: namely, that the deleterious

consequences of excessive permissiveness in particular are greater for boys than girls, whereas the risks of excessive control in particular are greater for girls than boys. A detailed interpretation of this pattern is beyond the scope of this discussion, but the consistency with which this finding has emerged over the years across an array of outcome variables is noteworthy (e.g., see Bronfenbrenner, 1961; Stein & Bailey, 1973).

Although the sample in this study did not permit us to examine the benefits of authoritativeness among nonwhite youngsters, findings reported by Dornbusch et al. (1987) indicate that these parenting practices have virtually across-the-board advantages for school success. Moreover, the general absence of any significant interactions between parent-child relation factors and adolescent age in this study indicate that the benefits of parental authoritativeness are more or less equal across the early secondary school years. The power of authoritative parenting in promoting school success is all the more significant in light of recent studies indicating that parental decision-making and disciplinary practices can be changed through educational and clinical intervention (see Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986).

Some readers may find inconsistent, or perhaps puzzling, the finding that both parental permissiveness and psychological control are associated with poor school

performance. The apparent inconsistency is due to the difference between behavioral autonomy, too much of which may leave the youngster without adequate guidance and limits, and psychological autonomy, too little of which may leave the youngster without sufficient emotional resources of his or her own. Thus parental permissiveness, which may indicate the absence of adequate behavioral demands on the child's behavior, is associated with a range of problem behaviors; while psychological control, which may indicate a stifling, dependency-fostering parenting style, is related to deficiencies in the development of self-direction. The challenge for parents of young adolescents may be to grant sufficient psychological autonomy to their child without granting an excessive degree of behavioral autonomy.

Although this study does not clarify how or why authoritative parenting has a positive impact on school performance, the findings here suggest that the mediating factor is neither the development of a healthy sense of self-reliance or work orientation nor the differential assignment of character-building responsibilities. Previous research has pointed to the possible role of parental identification in youngsters' school success, and there is reason to believe that authoritative parenting may facilitate this process (Hill, 1980). As Brook and her colleagues have pointed out, however, parental identification is related to healthy psychological

functioning only when the objects of the identification are themselves psychologically healthy (Brook et al., 1984, 1986). Perhaps parental authoritativeness is correlated with parental achievement orientation, and authoritative parenting thereby facilitates identification with models who themselves are oriented toward achievement. Alternatively, the process of authoritative parenting, with its emphasis on discussion and explanation in parent-child communication, may facilitate the development of cognitive skills that are related to school success (see also Hill, 1980). In any case, the identification of authoritative parenting as having real-world advantages for youngsters warrants further, systematic analysis of the behaviors through which this type of parenting is exercised.

Footnote

[1]The findings concerning parental authoritarianism present a somewhat more complicated picture. In the short-term, strictness appears to have negative consequences for school success and school attendance among boys. The opposite is true, however, when school attendance is examined longitudinally; in this case, strictness leads to increased attendance. One likely interpretation is that the concurrent negative correlation between strictness and school performance and attendance is due to the effects that youngsters have on their parents, rather than vice-versa. That is, it may be the case that youngsters' poor records of school performance or attendance <u>provoke</u> parental strictness.

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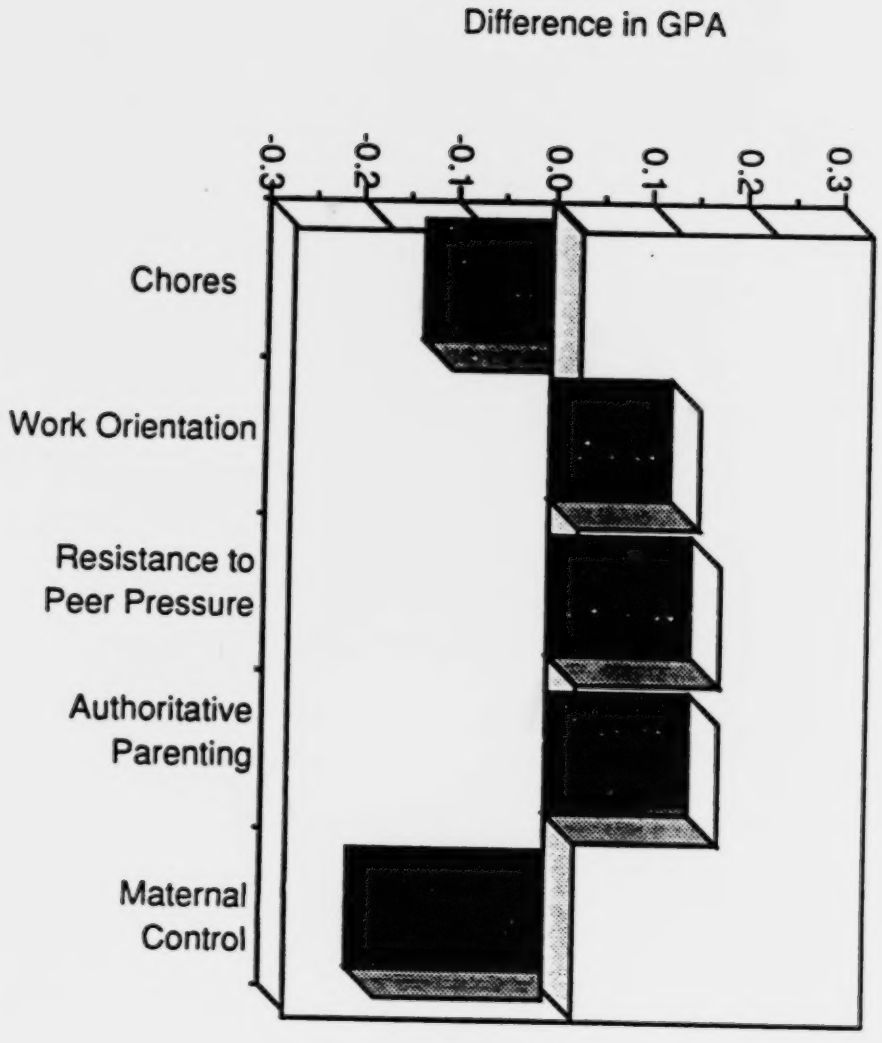
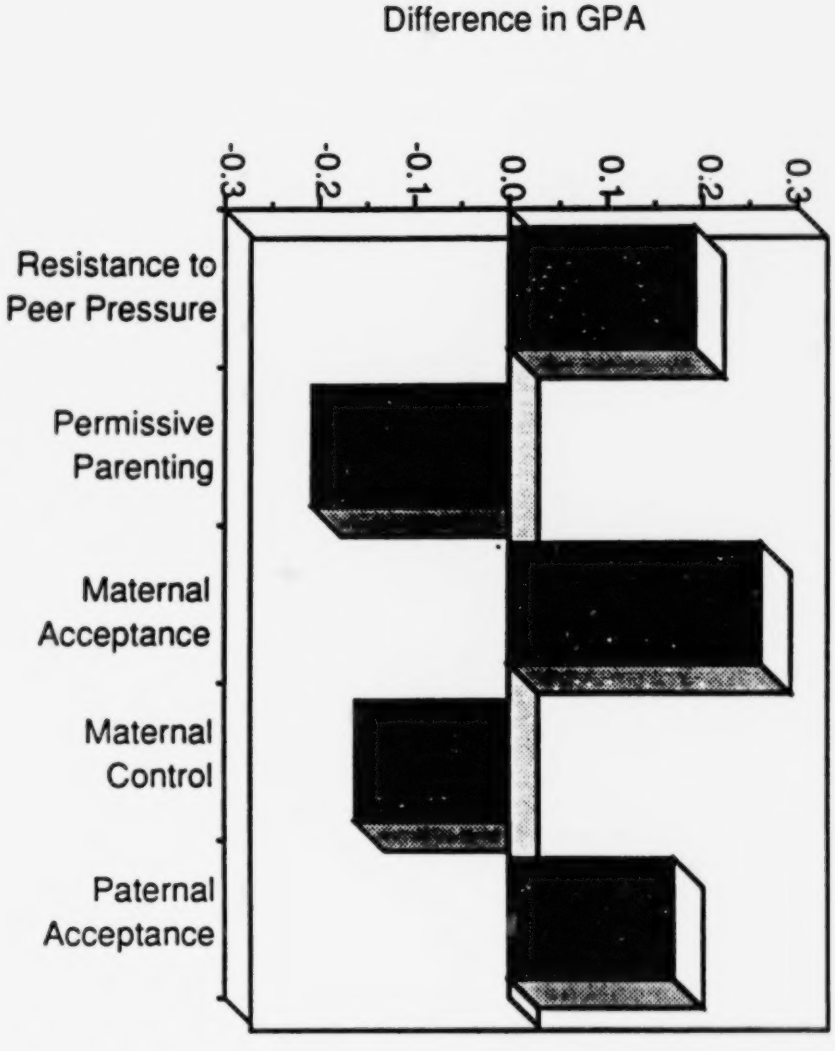
Figure Captions

Figure 1: Estimated difference in current grade point average, above and beyond the effects of age, sex, SES, and achievement test scores, between students who are relatively high (25th percentile) versus relatively low (75th percentile) with respect to their involvement in household chores, work orientation, resistance to peer pressure, reports of authoritative parenting, and reports of maternal control.

Figure 2: Estimated difference in current grade point average, above and beyond the effects of age, sex, SES, achievement test scores, and previous year's grade point average, between students who were relatively high (25th percentile) versus relatively low (75th percentile) one year previously with respect to their resistance to peer pressure, reports of permissive parenting, reports of maternal acceptance, reports of maternal control, and reports of paternal acceptance.


Difference in GPA
-0.3
-0.2
-0.1
0.0
0.1
0.2
0.3
Chores
Work Orientation
Resistance to Peer Pressure
Authoritative Parenting
Maternal Control


Difference in GPA
-0.3
-0.2
-0.1
0.0
0.1
0.2
0.3
Resistance to Peer Pressure
Permissive Parenting
Maternal Acceptance
Maternal Control
Paternal Acceptance